

COCREATING SPIRIT'S JOURNEY

by Mark Certo

Since 1988, I have produced the *METAMUSIC*® catalog for The Monroe Institute and its commercial agent, Interstate Industries, Inc. That role has required me to be objective toward the project in order to guide the artists/composers appropriately. It has been a great honor to work with them and to see the beneficial results.

During my years at TMI, from time to time I have put on the composer's hat and added a bit of music—perhaps an intro or a relaxation sequence—to some of the predominantly verbal Hemi-Sync® exercises. The role of composer is very different from that of recording engineer/producer, probably because of my individual style. I hear the music playing in my head first and then attempt to recreate it for others to hear. The process is both sacred and frustrating. I have always felt that the music moving in and through me is of divine origin. Such sounds are often difficult (if not impossible) to replicate. Hence the frustration. Because of this inherent tension, I have composed only for myself. The bulk of my work has never been recorded. When I was asked to create a short piece of music for the Institute's *HEARTLINE*® program, all of that changed.

For some reason, the music that came through for that program was exceptionally easy to recreate. It was then used in several tape exercises that became available to the TMI membership. To my surprise, members began to contact TMI and III. They were sure that the music had been excerpted from a new *METAMUSIC* title and were disappointed to learn that it was just a short intro theme. My beloved friend and employer, Laurie Monroe, suggested that I break my personal taboo and expand the music into a full-length composition. For the reasons stated above, I strongly resisted the idea. My accustomed roles were very comfortable.

Laurie persistently and lovingly dismantled my self-created box. I found myself accepting the challenge on the condition that I would have unlimited artistic freedom. She agreed, and soon I was sitting in front of a piano keyboard wondering how to fulfill my promise. It's easy to access musical ideas. Letting go of my need to express them perfectly was the real hurdle. My internal wrestling match began.

As the fragments of ideas coalesced into full musical statements, I found that the process—despite my initial reservations—was far less painful than I had anticipated. There were many times when I slipped back into my frustrated perfectionist mode, only to remember that the objective was to just let the music come through. About halfway through the recording process, I started to wonder what this piece was about. What story did it tell? Consulting the source of the music itself, I was told that it was a journey—a personal journey certainly, but also

something more. I suddenly flashed on a beautiful story I had read some years ago entitled "The Hymn of the Pearl." It is one of many Gnostic texts written around 300 C.E. and encapsulates for me the meaning of our life on earth. The story describes a journey of the spirit, through incarnation and its return to its origins after obtaining the pearl it was sent to retrieve. For me, the pearl represents wisdom gained through experience.

With that final piece of the puzzle, the music took on a life of its own. I am fully aware of my need to have undertaken this journey. I am grateful for all who were involved with the process: Laurie Monroe for her unfailing support, my wife, Carmie, for her honest feedback and love, and those who inquired about the *METAMUSIC* which did not yet exist. Most of all, I extend gratitude to the source of this music and of all unmanifested ideas. *Spirit's Journey* is dedicated to all of the divine spirits and all of the friends who have shared my own spirit's journey. May the peace of the eternal one live in your awareness always!

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